

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **ISSUES OF GREATER THAN LOCAL CONCERN**

**What are the issues both inside and outside the county that will affect this plan?**

In reality, there is a lot happening in and around Manistee County that will have a big impact on what happens in the county in the future. To name a few:

**Watersheds** – The drainage areas of lakes, rivers and streams do not follow arbitrary property or government boundaries. For example, the Manistee River crosses half of Michigan before entering Manistee Lake. The long term protection and enhancement of surface and ground water depends on the natural health of the watersheds, and that will depend on extensive cooperation among governmental units, and what property owners within a “drainage area” put in and on the ground, and the water removed.

**Lake Michigan Shoreline** – The county is blessed with having its entire western boundary as Lake Michigan shoreline. This tremendous natural feature provides opportunity for viewing, recreation and living close to Lake Michigan and provides opportunities for fishing and recreation that increase the chance for income and employment. However, the shoreline is subject to changes by natural events such as water levels and storms which may change the fragile shoreline. This is a situation shared by all counties and other governmental units along the Lake Michigan coast. Any future plans must take into account this unique feature and seek ways to protect the shoreline while allowing its use and enjoyment.

**Federal Forests** – The county is blessed with extensive acres of the Manistee National Forest, covering most of the south half of the county. In addition, the Pere Marquette State Forest is partially located in the northern portion of the county and on into Benzie County. Policies and programs involving the management of these huge land areas will have a great impact on how the county will look in the future. Decisions affecting these forests and how they are used in the future affect private forests and how they can be managed and harvested by their owners, and many other related agencies and interests are affected.

**Transportation Systems** – We have learned in a previous chapter that Manistee County’s roads are in excellent shape as compared to other counties in Northwest Michigan and the State of Michigan in general. The map on the next page shows how main state and federal highways connect Manistee County with the rest of Michigan and the nation. U.S. 31 is a freeway as far north as Ludington, and plans have been under consideration for many years to extend this freeway on north. It is not known when, if ever, this will take place, but a freeway to Manistee would provide a very important change to the traffic, the environment, and enhance opportunities for business expansion in the county.

INTERCOUNTY  
INFLUENCES

LAKE  
MICHIGAN

